



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

A PROCLAMATION DEDICATION OF THE HMS OTRANTO MEMORIAL

- WHEREAS: In summer 1918, following America's entry into World War I, 2nd Lt. Sam E. Levy, a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology, was ordered to muster 580 recruits to the United States Army Coast Artillery Corps (CAC) in support of Allied Forces stationed on the Western Front; and
- WHEREAS: On September 19, 1918, 574 CAC recruits and officers boarded a train at Fort Screven on Tybee Island, Georgia, and journeyed to New York in anticipation of the British troopship HMS Otranto. Many of the men bound for New York were between the ages of 18 and 20 and were residents of Georgia; and
- WHEREAS: On September 25, 1918, the HMS Otranto left New York with more than 1,025 British and American servicemen and crew, including 701 U.S. soldiers, to join the Allied Forces in Europe; and
- WHEREAS: On October 6, 1918, near the Scottish coast in stormy seas, the HMS Otranto collided with a sister ship, HMS Kashmir. Despite orders to stand clear, the HMS Mounsey, captained by Lt. Frances Craven, made five separate passes to the HMS Otranto during which time soldiers and members of the crew jumped from the sinking ship in attempts to survive. Lt. Craven's heroic act saved almost 600 lives; and
- WHEREAS: Approximately 470 soldiers and crewmen, including more than 130 Georgia natives, died following the sinking of the HMS Otranto, marking the single largest loss of life in troop transport during World War I. Nearly a third of the 130 Georgians killed were residents of Screven and Berrien counties; and
- WHEREAS: On September 15, 2018, American Legion Post 154 will hold a ceremony to commemorate the placement of a historical plaque at Fort Screven to memorialize the troops lost upon the sinking of the HMS Otranto; and
- WHEREAS: Citizens of Georgia and our nation are forever indebted to those who gave their lives to preserve and protect American freedom and democracy; now
- THEREFORE: I, NATHAN DEAL, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby recognize September 15, 2018, as the DEDICATION OF THE HMS OTRANTO MEMORIAL in honor of the 470 soldiers and crew members lost aboard the HMS Otranto.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 6th day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand eighteen.



Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

ATTEST

Chris W. Rely
CHIEF OF STAFF